

Preliminary Amendment
§371 of PCT/FR2004/002321
Attorney Docket No. LAV05005

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original): A method of keeping an aqueous solution of sodium borate liquid at a storage temperature, in which method, in order to pass said solution from an initial temperature to the storage temperature, said aqueous solution of sodium borate is subjected to heat treatment comprising at least one cooling or heating operation at a speed lying in the range 1°C/min to 100°C/min, to reach a holding temperature lying in the range -50°C to +200°C, followed by holding the holding temperature for a time lying in the range 1 s to 100 h, followed by cooling or heating at a speed lying in the range 1°C/min to 100°C/min.

2. (Currently amended): A method according to claim 1, characterized in that wherein the heat treatment includes at least two holding operations at different holding temperatures.

3. (Currently amended): A method according to claim 1 or claim 2, characterized in that, wherein, prior to performing the heat treatment, the aqueous solution of sodium borate is at an initial temperature lying in the range 100°C to 180°C, and after performing the heat treatment, the aqueous solution of sodium borate is at a storage temperature lying in the range -50°C to +300°C.

4. (Currently amended): A method according to claim 3, characterized in that wherein the storage treatment lies in the range -20°C to +50°C.

5. (Currently amended): A method according to any one of claims claim 1 to 4, characterized in that, wherein the aqueous solution of sodium borate contains 5% to 65% by weight of sodium borate.

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6. (Currently amended): A method according to claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the aqueous solution of sodium borate further contains 0% to 10% by weight of soda.

7. (Currently amended): A method of generating hydrogen in which sodium borohydride is caused to react with water and both a gaseous mixture constituted mainly of hydrogen and an aqueous solution of sodium borate are extracted therefrom, ~~the method being characterized in that~~ wherein the aqueous solution of sodium borate is subjected to the method according to ~~any one of~~ claims claim 1 to 6.

8. (Currently amended): The ~~use of the~~ method of claim 7 ~~to feed,~~ comprising feeding hydrogen to a fuel cell.

9. (Currently amended): The ~~use of the~~ method of claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the fuel cell is the fuel cell of a motor vehicle.

10. (Currently amended): The ~~use of the~~ method according to claim 7 ~~for generating~~ wherein the hydrogen is used in medicine, in the agrifood industry, in the fabrication of electronic components, and/or in the implementation of heat treatments on metal products.